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DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

THE ETOWAH MOUND GROUP

THE writer visited the great mound near Cartersville, Bartow county, Georgia, in March, 1918. The land had been recently ploughed and no rain had fallen for some time; the ground was therefore very dry and the conditions favorable for observation.

The mound, or mound group, stands on the northerly side of the Etowah river, close to the bank, about three miles from Cartersville. It consists of the great mound, sixty-one feet in height,¹ with a base, three hundred and thirty by three hundred and eighty feet, covering slightly less than three acres. The great mound contains about four million three hundred thousand cubic feet of earth. The area of the top is about one hundred and seventy by one hundred and seventy-six feet, or about seven tenths of an acre. There are two smaller mounds, about fifteen feet in height, one on each flank of the great mound, between it and the river.

The group is situated in a small plain, or bottom land, in the bend of the river, from which the land rises on all sides to the hills. There is a considerable dip, or swale, a short distance from the group on the west-erly, or downstream side.

The plan of this group given in Squier and Davis,² does not give a correct idea of the situation. The group described therein is located on the Coosa river, somewhere in Alabama, apparently.

The plan given in figure 1, *Smithsonian Report*, 1881, page 624, conveys an entirely erroneous impression of the encircling ditch, which is represented as beginning in the river, below the group, sweeping in a continuous circle nearly around it to the northeasterly side. In this description Charles Whittelsey states that the ditch is about two hundred yards distant from the group of mounds which seems to the writer about correct.

The drawing accompanying the article by Cyrus Thomas³ represents the ditch in about the same fashion; that is to say, beginning in the river below the group, encircling it nearly to the river above. In addition,

¹ F. W. Hodge, *Handbook of American Indians*, vol. I, p. 444.

² *Ancient Monuments*.

³ *Twelfth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, page 299.

the two large ponds, or pits, are shown lying northwesterly from the group connected with the ditch. Some writers have offered the opinion that the ditch originally touched the river at each end.

There are two features of the great mound which have attracted notice in the past. On the southerly, or river side, there is an apron or platform of earth reaching on the westerly side to within about twenty feet of the top, and declining on the easterly side to the level of the ground. It is about fifty feet in width and has often been described as a roadway, or ramp, leading to the top; the final ascent, it is supposed, was accomplished by a flight of steps.

The other feature to which we have alluded is a projection, or slide, of earth on the easterly side, sometimes conjectured to have been a refuse heap.

At the time of the writer's visit, the timber had been recently cut away and the top freshly ploughed. The sides are still as steep as it is possible to make such slopes with the stiff tenacious clay used in their construction. A stone knife was picked up by the writer while ascending the difficult slope on the westerly side.

C. C. Jones¹ has the following statement:

East of this group, and within the enclosure, is a chain of four sepulchral mounds, ovoidal in shape. Little interest attaches to them. Nothing, aside from their location in the vicinity of these larger tumuli and their being within the area formed by the canal and the river, distinguishes them from numerous earth-mounds scattered here and there throughout the length and breadth of the Eto-wah and Oostenaula valleys.

Charles Whittlesey² refers to these small mounds in the following manner:

Two hundred yards to the northeast are the remains of four low mounds within the ditch, near the large pits.

It was these small mounds which, having gained the top of the great mound and looking off in the direction of the northeast, first arrested the writer's attention. The earth surrounding the group of large mounds is dark, nearly black, in color, of a loose loamy texture; growing lighter in color away from the group. Across the small plain, or bottom, the ground rises into a terrace on the easterly and northerly sides, while it drops away into a swale to the westward.

Along the edge of this terrace, the objects described by C. C. Jones stand out prominently in the landscape as red heaps, or low mounds, disposed in regular order on the right hand, or easterly, side. A few

¹ *Antiquities of the Southern Indians*, page 139.

² *Op. cit.*, page 626.

bits of broken pottery may be picked up in the intervening space, or bottom. Arrived at the mounds, they appear distinctly differentiated from the surrounding land in form, color, and texture. The earth upon them is red, tends to unite into masses, and has decidedly the appearance of having been burned. These mounds are distinctly pear-shaped, with the smaller end turned towards the great mound. Numerous bits of broken pottery are lying about them.

Towards the left, in the middle of the circle, three more similar prominences appear, rounding off in the same manner as the first, composed of the same burned, red earth, strewn with broken pottery. They are much less distinct than the first three to the right. Further on, towards the left, or downstream side of the circle, along the inside rim of the swale, the land reveals three slight swellings, on which bits of pottery are more frequent than in the plain. The earth here is very sandy and loose; so much so that the impressions retained in the second group of small mounds have here nearly faded away. Still further to the left, next to the river, is a large refuse heap, abundantly covered with fragments of all kinds. There is a similar heap correspondingly located at the east end of the circle.

By pacing off these mounds, the writer came to the conclusion that they were about one hundred and twenty feet in diameter, and that they were the remains of nine great earth-lodges, or communal dwellings, disposed in a horse-shoe around the three large mounds. The pear-shaped projections on the inner side being the remains of the entrance passages. The style of construction followed being that of the Pawnee Earth Lodge illustrated by Hodge.¹

The writer picked up on the easterly mound of the main group a piece of red clay somewhat larger than the two fists, having through it the perforations left by the hay or straw with which it had been mixed, the whole showing the effects of fire. This lump of clay was smooth and convex on one side, showing the effect of smoothing tools, indicating that it had formed part of the outside covering of some structure. A small piece of the same material was picked up on top of the great mound and some small bits elsewhere. It is evidently the same material as that found upon the small mounds, which has been broken down by weather and plough.

If the writer is correct in the conjecture that these small mounds represent the sites of great earthlodges, a kind of communal dwellings, then they were of exceptionally large size, for the largest heretofore reported range from forty to sixty feet only in diameter.

¹ *Op. cit.*, page 410.

Turning to the ditch, the writer does not hold with those who believe that it completed a circle from the river bank above to that below. The writer found no evidence of the ditch reaching to the river on the downstream, or westerly side. The ground is too low there, the soil too friable and the swale too wide to have admitted its construction. On the upstream side the ground lies too flat and low. The ditch passes through a ridge, or terrace of high ground back of the third, fourth, and fifth mounds, or lodges sites, where the present farm road crosses in a northerly direction, so that the upper portion of the ditch is cut off from the remainder; if, indeed, it was ever continuous. At the extreme easterly end the ditch opens out into a sort of pit, or pond, which, however, is entirely open towards the river. The sides of the ditch are clear cut today and practically perpendicular in the stiff clay of the locality.

In case of inundation from the river, which people of this locality affirm sometimes occurs, the ditch might well have served to carry off, or divert, the waters for the protection of the town; but it seems unlikely that it was intended to afford protection to the town in the sense of a moat.

The recesses which have sometimes been described as ponds, reservoirs, or fish-preserves appear to have been merely pits from whence the material for the construction of the mounds and dwellings was taken. They are on the northwesterly side; one at the end of the ditch, the other across from the former separated from it by a considerable section of undisturbed earth. The latter is merely a pit, having no connection with the ditch system. The so-called pond at the easterly end of the ditch has the same character.

The so-called ramp, or roadway, to the top of the great mound is evidently an addition, or extension, to the great mound itself, which was abandoned in course of construction. Its sides are parallel to three of the sides of the mound, and the westerly face conforms to the sloping side of the mound. It could not have been intended for a roadway, or path, for the dirt is piled upon it very unevenly, especially at the westerly end where it rises in a great irregular hump. That it is an uncompleted extension is also well shown by the drawing of the great mound by Cyrus Thomas.¹ If this conjecture is correct, we have before us an example of the manner by which the Indian mounds grew, in size.

The projection or slide on the easterly side of the great mound is a talus formed by the materials washed down from the top surface. All of the erosion from the top was carried off in this way, as shown by the

¹ *Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, page 96.

slope of the entire top in this direction, through a gully which leads out to the talus or slide.

Nothing of especial interest struck the attention of the writer in regard to the two large mounds next to the river bank. There is no evidence of any dwellings in the bottom land surrounding the group of large mounds. It was probably left open for meetings, playgrounds, and similar assemblages.

In Indian villages, the town house was usually placed upon the great mound, which was often occupied by the residence of the chief and his family; while the two large mounds may have served for the sacred fire, disposal of the dead, or other religious purposes. The tribe lived in the circle of great earthlodges. Some Indian towns, with their assemblages of clay bedaubed huts, resembled at a distance a group of burnt brick kilns. (Lowery, *Spanish Settlements*, p. 59.)

In its flourishing days, this town must have presented, in the midst of this beautiful and fertile valley, a truly imposing appearance.

HUBERT H. S. AIMES

SEWANEE, TENNESSEE

CORRIGENDA TO "KINSHIP TERMS OF THE KOOTENAY INDIANS"

A NUMBER of misprints have crept into my paper on "Kinship Terms of the Kootenay Indians" (vol. 20 of this journal, pp. 414-418). They are listed here for the convenience of those who may wish to correct their copies.

Page 414, no. 11: for *ga-d'to* read *ga-di'to*.

" 415, no. 21: read *ga-cwin'a'til*.

" 416, no. 27: read *ga-'aqltsma'k'uni'k'*.

" " , no. 28: read *ga-ṣat.gaṣṣaniyat'u'm'a'l*.

" " , no. 29: read *ga-tl'uma't'i'*.

" " , no. 30: read *gu-'ok'ukuxwe'm'a'l*.

" " , no. 31: read *ga'-gunk'na'amo'*.

E. SAPIR

KINSHIP TERMS OF THE KUTENAI INDIANS

ON page 414 *et seq.* of vol. 20 of the *American Anthropologist* Dr. Sapir gives an almost complete list of the kinship terms of the Kutenai. Only one important term has been omitted—*ah'tsk'i'l* "sibling or cousin of opposite sex." Persons who stand in the relation never address each other in the second person, but always in an oblique form of the third person. This leads to some grammatical forms which are never